Recommendations of the Business Advisory Committee

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have to inform Members that the Business Advisory Committee, at its meeting held on the 7th August, 2001, allotted time for the Government Legislative Business as follows :-

	BUSINESS	TIME ALLOTTED
1.	Consideration and passing of the following Bills :-	
	(a) The Marriage Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2001	2 Hours
	(b) The Code of Criminal Procedure (Amendment) Bill, 2001	1 Hour
2.	Consideration and passing of the following Bills after they have been passed by Lok Sabha:-	
	(a) The Food Corporations (Amendment) Bill, 2001.	2 Hours
	(b) The Livestocks Importation (Amendment) Bill, 2001	1 Hour
	(c) The Indian Council of World Affairs Bill, 2001	2 Hours
	(d) The General Insurance Business (Nationalisation) Amendment Bill, 2001	3 Hours
	(e) The Central Vigilance Commission Bill, 2000	3 Hours

RE: KILLINGS IN JAMMU REGION

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE (West Bengal): I would like to draw the attention of the House to the ghastly killings that are taking place in Jammu. Mr. Chairman, Sir, after the Agra summit failed, in the post-summit meeting with the Leaders of the Opposition, it was pointed out that the extremists and the militants would escalate their activities in the Jammu and Kashmir region. I was told that the Government had assured the Leaders of the Opposition that they were in a state of full preparedness to meet any eventuality. Is this the level of their preparedness? Every day, killings are taking place. Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is not difficult to anticipate the problems which are going to emerge. The extremists and the militants are getting encouraged by the developments during the summit and the post-summit scenario. Therefore, it was expected on the part of the Government that they would take action to ensure that the situation remained under control and the escalation did not take place, but exactly the opposite has happened.

Sir, we were assured by the Home Minister, when he responded to the first series of killings that 'we are going to take strong action', but that 'strong action' has been followed by further killings. Therefore, may I suggest to the hon. House, through you, Sir, that these matters require a detailed discussion and the House must articulate its views? The Government must come out with its own response as to how they are going to tackle the situation, because the problem of Jammu & Kashmir, the problem of cross-border terrorism, is not confined to one area alone. It has very larger and wider ramifications. Every day we cannot simply be expected to be immunised by the news of killings, as it happened in the case of certain other territory. Therefore, I would like to request the House to have a discussion on it.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU (West Bengal): Sir, before going into this discussion, we will just ask for a reply from the Home Minister or whoever is there in the Government. Four days back, when we raised the issue of Doda massacre, we were told by the Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs that the Minister of State for Home Affairs, Mr. I.D. Swami, had gone to Doda, and that he would be coming back with a report. I understand from Press reports that he had come back the day-before-yesterday. But there was no statement by the Government, which was implicit in the submission of the Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs. Then, today morning also, in the List of Business, there is nothing to indicate the Government's urgency to inform the House about what is happening, in spite of the fact that an unprecedented incident had taken place inside the Jammu Railway Station itself. Now, Sir, apart from plugging whatever loopholes are there in the security set-up, the urgency that the Government has to display, is not there. I am saying this because the Government is saying that the issue of cross-border terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir is a national issue. We are prepared to accept that this is a national issue, and the entire House should condemn it and should try to devise ways and means to overcome it. But, at the same time, the urgency that was due from the Government side, that is never on display. The Home Minister said, "I will treat them with an iron hand", but we are only watching a feet of clay, insofar as the tackling of the terrorist problem is concerned. So, I think, the Government owes this House an explanation as to why they have failed to show the kind of urgency, which was warranted by the seriousness of the situation.

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): Mr. Chairman, Sir, though, at the moment, only two hon. Members have spoken, I am sure, their words reflected the agony and anguish of every Member of this House, and the Government shares this anguish. In fact, even before this incident of dastardly killings which took place at the Jammu Railway Station last night, a series of incidents had taken place in Doda district. Sir, Doda district, which obviously was chosen by the militants, has been an area where there are very small hamlets, a few families here or a few families there, and spread out, where naturally the targets were easier. The people there were more vulnerable to this kind of a determined bid, and, particularly, at a time, when a large number of people had to be re-deployed for the Amarnath Yatra. It is, therefore, that the Minister of State for Home Affairs went there, not once, but twice. He has again gone there because of the Jammu incident. But, in the meanwhile, I had spoken to the Governor of Jammu & Kashmir, to the Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir and to my colleague in the Ministry here, in the Government here - the Defence Minister - and decided that on Wednesday - which is today - evening, we will have a meeting of all concerned who are concerned with the security of Jammu & Kashmir and prepare a proper response, an adequate response to this. I am sure, the whole country would stand behind this kind of firm dealing with those who are indulging in the killings of innocent people - men, women and children. And, unfortunately, they have received the kind of an appellation, which is most perverse, that this is a freedom struggle that is going on. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the hon. Home Minister explain, why did the Government not come forward earlier with a statement? Why are you late in explaining to the House?

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: Sir, I have no objection to any structured discussion or debate on this subject, in whatever manner it takes place. In the other House, I am told the Speaker has committed a Calling Attention on this tomorrow. Immediately after that, we can have a debate here. I have no objection.

MR. CHAIRMAN: At what time?

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: I leave it to you.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Sir, let the hon. Minister reply, why did he not come forward with a statement earlier, in spite of the assurance by the Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, he is coming forward.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Why the delay? Now, he is saying that, today, in the evening, he will have a meeting. People are being killed. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI B.J. PANDA (Orissa) : Sir, they are indulging in politics.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: There is no question of indulging in politics. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI (Uttar Pradesh): Sir, the Home Minister's version had said that after Mr. Swami returns ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: We have also seen that. ...*(Interruptions)*... You have not expressed any sense of remorse. Things are not coming forward. You are saying that today in the evening you are having a meeting. In the meanwhile, dozens of people are being killed. There should be some sense of remorse.

SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI: What type of remorse do you require?

श्री राजू परमार (गुजरात) : हाउस में आकर कोई नहीं बोलता Prof. Chaman Lal Gupta had gone on the TV yesterday. Similarly Mr. Swami was shown on the Press and TV, both. Here, inside the House, they are not speaking.

श्री मूल चन्द मीणा (राजस्थान) : सदन में कहने से डरते हैं क्या? ...(**व्यवधान**)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let the Home Minister complete, please.

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: So far as the point raised by Shri Nilotpalji is concerned, about the Minister of the State for Parliamentary Affairs having told the House that Swamiji had gone there, that after he returned he would inform the House, the same statement was made in the other House also. It was pointed out in the other House that a high-level meeting had been fixed for Wednesday, to deal with the issue. Naturally, they also thought that it would be proper for the Government to come to the House with a comprehensive view of the situation, as gathered, not merely what the Minister of State had seen in Doda, but in Jammu and Kashmir as well, and what kind of response would be adequate.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: What you are saying now, could have been done earlier in the form of a *suo motu* statement.

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: Nilotpalji, i am trying to explain every point that you have raised. Therefore, Thursday was decided by the other House,

perhaps, yesterday or the day-before-yesterday, because it was felt that after this meeting on Wednesday, it would be proper for the Government to come to the House with the entire Jammu and Kashmir view in mind, not merely the villages in Kishtwar, which the Minister of State for Home had visited.

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Sir, some sort of an assurance and commitment was made by the Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs. They could have informed the House that they were going to make a comprehensive statement and we would have remained satisfied. I do agree with the Home Minister that the issue is so sensitive that it requires a studied and correct response, but, at the same time, when a commitment had been made, why that commitment could not be fulfilled must be explained. That is the point we wanted to make.

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: I appreciate what you say. We should have come to the House yesterday and informed the House that it would be appropriate if we could take up this issue on Thursday.

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE (West Bengal) : That is all right, but your Ministers are media crazy. They feel more at home in talking to the media than speaking inside the House. We are facing this problem. On every national issue, they are more at home in the media than here in the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: As the hon. Home Minister is going to make the statement in the Lok Sabha at 2 O' clock,...

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: In the other House it is in the form of a Calling Attention. Here, I will come at 2 O' clock.

MR. CHAIRMAN: So, you will make a statement here at 2'O clock. Is it all right?

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: That is all right. He will make a statement at 2 O' clock and we will take up the statement immediately, in the form of a discussion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In the form of a discussion or clarifications?

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: In the form of a discussion, for two hours, because this subject requires not merely clarifications on some technical points here and there, but the House should respond adequately to the incidents which are taking place. It will help us if we can start the

discussion, with the statement of the Home Minister. Thereafter we will have a structured discussion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: For how long? Should it be for two hours?

SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: For two-and-a-half hours.

CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Recent Incidents of Fire in Ordnance Depots in the Country and the Remedial Measures Taken by Government With Regard Thereto

श्री सुरेश पचौरी (मध्य प्रदेश) : आदरणीय सभापति महोदय, मैं देश में आयुध डिपुओं में आग लगने की हाल की घटनाओं और सरकार द्वारा तत्संबंधी किए गए उपचारी उपायों पर रक्षा मंत्री का ध्यान आकर्षित करता हूं ।

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): Mr. Chairman, Sir, hon. Members would recall that yesterday I had informed them about a minor ammunition related accident, in the Laboratory located in Ammunition Technical Area of Central Ordnance Depot, Jabalpur that had occurred on 6th August, 2001. In response to that statement, hon. Members had suggested, and I had concurred that a fuller discussion about fires in Ordnance depots, during the last two years, specifically from 28th April, 2000, should take place. No doubt, hon. Members have taken note that during the current session of the Parliament, I have already answered a number of questions, on this very issue, in both the Houses.

As hon. Members are aware there were seven incidents of fire, of different intensity, in Ordnance Depots, during this period of two years. Details about these fire accidents I will shortly detail. I might add at the very outset that except in the case of the fire at Ammunition Depot, Bharatpur there has been no loss to civilian life or property in any of these accidents:

(a) Ammunition Depot, Bharatpur (28th April, 2000): Two civilians died and seven civilians were injured. The loss to civilian property was estimated at Rs.70 lakhs.

(b) Ammunition Depot, Dehu Road (3rd May, 2000)

(c) Central Ordnance Depot, Kanpur. (28th May, 2000)